



Iowa Power Fund Community Grants

Request for Proposal

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1. Award Information

The Iowa Office of Energy Independence (OEI) sets the strategic direction for Iowa's clean energy future by identifying goals to achieve desired results. As the state energy office, OEI works to protect the environment and stimulate the economy through utilization of energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy resources. OEI provides information, resources and financial incentives to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

The purpose of the Community Grant program is to engage communities throughout the State of Iowa to develop greater awareness about the ways that communities can increase energy efficiency and produce more renewable energy.

Anticipated Funding

Approximately \$600,000 of Iowa Power Fund money will be available to fund awards under this RFP. This is a competitive funding process. Projects are eligible for \$1,000 to \$50,000 in funding. OEI anticipates awarding approximately 15-45 projects. **Generally, all awards will be distributed on a reimbursement basis.** Only funds expended after contract execution will be eligible for reimbursement.

RFP Schedule

Event	Date
Release of RFP	February 17, 2011
First Day OEI will accept applications	February 17, 2011
Final Day OEI will accept applications*	May 15, 2011 at 11:59pm
Expected Date of Award to Recipients	March 31, 2011 – June 1, 2011
Project Start Date	Based on Award
Project Completion Date	No later than June 30, 2012

*Once OEI has selected enough projects to exhaust the available funds under the RFP or when May 15th is reached, whichever occurs first, OEI will stop accepting or reviewing further proposal submissions. While OEI will continue accepting applications, this is no guarantee that funding is available.

Definitions

“Administrative Costs” means those costs that cannot be identified with any single program but are indispensable to the conduct of grant activities. Examples of administration costs that may be included are (but not limited to) reporting, documentation, monitoring and verification incurred in the management of the award contract.

“Applicant” means an eligible applicant.

“Application” means a request for Iowa Power Fund Community Grant funds by submitting the required information as stipulated in this RFP.

“Authorized Official” means an official who has the authority to sign contractual documents on behalf of the entity the official represents.

“Energy Efficiency” means measures that reduce the amount of energy required to achieve a given end use.

“Matching Funds” means funds made available to the project from sources other than Iowa Power Fund Community Grant dollars to further the objectives of the project.

“OEI” refers to the Iowa Office of Energy Independence.

“Project Completion Date” means the date that all grant tasks are complete and equipment is installed and operational.

2. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for this grant include cities, counties, non-profit organizations, organizations involved with energy efficiency or conservation efforts, environmental organizations, or groups that have a tax identification number within Iowa.

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects must be physically located within the State of Iowa and should be completed within a six month period. Eligible projects include any projects or programs which would save energy units or energy dollars **except** for those projects which are listed under ineligible projects below. OEI will consider projects which fall into any of the following categories:

- Promotion of renewable energy systems
- Development of community energy savings plans
- Promotion of community energy savings opportunities
- Kindergarten through twelfth grade education programs
- Creation of community or regional energy efficiency alliances
- Energy efficiency public awareness campaign

Examples of possible projects include, but **are not limited to**:

- Anti-idling programs, in particular, programs focused on school bus fleets or municipal vehicle fleets – see www.iowacleancities.org for more information
- Green Business Councils – see the Innovation Consortium of Greater Dubuque Development Corporation at www.greaterdubuque.org for an example
- Community outreach and education components of renewable energy installations
- Programs which encourage greater awareness of energy efficiency measures and encourage homeowners and businesses to implement energy efficiency. See O Power’s

Home Energy Reporting Program at <http://www.opower.com/Approach/Overview.aspx> for more information

- Work hub studies to determine the feasibility of work hubs as a means to reduce vehicle miles traveled
- Development of a Community Energy Action Plan based on sound scientific surveys. Surveys of communities should elicit community members' ideas about energy use, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and best practices for a community to achieve energy savings. Planning as a result of the survey should be based on input gathered from a representative set of individuals within a community. The planning that ensues should be held in concert with various organizations that are representative of the community. Plans should include timelines, action steps, and risk management practices to ensure project success.

If applicants wish to receive additional guidance on project development, please read Section 5, Assistance, of this RFP.

Ineligible Projects and Costs

The following projects are **not** eligible for funding under this RFP:

- Installation or retrofits of HVAC systems
- Installation of geothermal units
- Energy efficient lighting retrofits
- Energy efficient window retrofits
- Building automation technology

The following costs are **not** eligible for funding under this RFP:

- Food
- Childcare

Matching Requirements

All projects must meet the cost share requirement to be eligible for funding. Under this RFP, a minimum 1 to 1 match is required. That is, for every dollar of funding requested, the applicant must provide a dollar in matching funds. Matching funds may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions, such as use of volunteers, donated time, donated meeting rooms, etc. Equipment and indirect costs will not be counted as in-kind matching funds.

If applicants obtain matching funds from project partners, those funds must be accompanied by letters of support from each partner who contributes matching funds. State funding **cannot** be used as matching funds.

Outputs

The term output refers to an activity, effort, and/or associated work product which is related to an energy goal. Outputs must be measurable during the grant period. All applicants should include the output by which their project will be measured in Section 7 of the application.

Examples of outputs which may be used in projects under this RFP may include, but are not limited to, the following: kilowatt hours saved; BTUs saved; kilowatt hours produced; energy dollars saved; reductions in vehicle miles traveled; number of educational materials distributed at outreach events; number of people who attended conferences, classes, workshops, or training sessions; or number of conferences, classes, workshops, or training sessions held.

Tasks and Performance Measures

All applicants should describe the steps which they will take to complete their project under the tasks section of the application. The application should also include at least one performance measure for each task. The performance measures should describe how the applicant can demonstrate that each task has been completed. Each task may also include an expected payment. The expected payment is the amount the applicant would expect to receive for completing the task. All expected payments should be based on the amount of funding the recipient is requesting, *not* the total cost of the project, i.e., the total amount of expected payments should equal the total amount of the funds requested.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete this section to the best of their ability. If an applicant feels an attachment would provide a more comprehensive picture of the tasks required, an applicant may include an attachment after first completing the chart in the application.

Eligibility Criteria

When reviewing applications, the OEI staff review committee shall consider the following:

- 1) Promotion of energy efficiency or renewable generation – the project's potential promotion of residential or small-scale renewable energy systems and the project's ability to reduce energy consumption, energy units or dollars spent on energy.
- 2) Collaboration
 - a. Whether the project establishes or supports a community-based, county-based or regional energy efficiency project or program.
 - b. The breadth and depth of community, county or regional involvement in the energy efficiency project or program.
 - c. The involvement of local schools, civic organizations, chambers of commerce and private groups.
 - d. The project's support of any existing or proposed ordinances encouraging energy efficiency and conservation or energy efficient building code provisions and enforcement.

- e. The project's efforts to secure local funding for the community-based, county-based, or regional energy efficiency project or program or for a funding sustainability program.

OEI will give consideration to applications based on their distribution throughout Iowa's five congressional districts. OEI may consider multiple applications from the same community. OEI may take into account geographic distribution in determining awards.

3. Selection Process

Awards are subject to the availability of funds and quality of evaluated proposals. Any inaccurate information of a significant nature may disqualify the application for consideration.

Evaluation Process

Applications will be evaluated (1) to determine whether the application submitted is completed in accordance with this RFP, (2) to determine whether the proposed project meets the project eligibility criteria specified in this RFP, and (3) to determine whether the application supports the goals of the Community Grant program.

Applications will be reviewed by the OEI staff review committee. The OEI staff review committee will make recommendations and present those recommendations to the Director of OEI. The Director will make final funding decisions based on the staff review committee's recommendations. In making the final funding decisions, the Director may also consider programmatic priorities and distribution of funds throughout Iowa's congressional districts.

Applicant may be requested to provide more information during the review process.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Eligibility of applicant
- Matching funds, including matching funds contributed by project partners.
- Promotion of energy efficiency or renewable energy generation
- Collaboration and community engagement
- Reasonableness of budget
- Proportion of project funds that are directly correlated to achievement of project goals, for example, the purchase of durable office goods is not considered to have a strong correlation to the achievement of project goals
- Applicant's readiness to implement project and feasibility of project execution
- Project complies with schedule requirements
- Project's visibility to the community in which it is based
- Replicability of the project in other communities
- Sustainability of the project after the project term has ended

Notification of Awards

After the review and selection process is completed, the Recipient will be notified that the project has been approved for funding at a specified amount. The Recipient will also receive a Grant Agreement Contract, which must be signed and mailed back to OEI within two weeks. The Grant Agreement Contract contains terms and conditions the grant recipient must follow.

Rejection of Applications

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing. Application documents will not be returned. OEI reserves the right to reject any application. The submission of an application under these guidelines confers no right upon any applicant. OEI is not obligated to award any grants, to pay any costs incurred by the applicant in the preparation and submission of an application, or pay any project-related costs incurred prior to the grant beginning date.

4. Application Process

Applicants are required to register and apply for funding through www.iowagrants.gov.

Any applicant who has not previously registered as a user on www.iowagrants.gov is advised to download a presentation from OEI's website homepage, www.energy.iowa.gov, for detailed instructions and useful tips on registering. **All registrations must be approved by OEI before filling out the application, so please allow up to 72 hours for a registration to be approved.**

Applicants must complete the requested information in the space provided in the text fields. Where necessary, please attach supporting documents for application answers. Please complete applicable sections fully. Always use clear and concise language when completing the application.

In addition to the above-stated requirement for letters of support from those entities contributing matching funds, applicants are encouraged to submit letters of support for their project. This can include letters from community leaders, business owners, non-profits and utilities.

OEI will begin accepting applications immediately. **All applications must be submitted by May 15, 2011 at 11:59pm.** Applications submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

5. Assistance

All questions regarding the RFP and application should be directed to Brenda Easter at brenda.easter2@iowa.gov.

Applicants are invited to send a brief notice of intent to apply to brenda.easter2@iowa.gov. This notice should be no more than one page and should include a description of the applicant's

organization, a brief description of the project, the projected amount of funds the applicant will be requesting, any possible sources of matching funds that have been identified, and the name and contact information of the project officer or application preparer. If applicants desire feedback on their project's development, please indicate that in the notice of intent to apply.

Notice

Information submitted to OEI in this application is governed by the Public Records Law under Iowa Code Chapter 22. Applicants should review Iowa Code Chapter 22 and the OEI Administrative Rules before submitting confidential information. Public records may be either open records or confidential records. All open records are available to the public for examination and copying; confidential records may be withheld from the public.

Appendix A. Budget Detail and Assumptions

All projects must provide detail on budget expenses by category for their funding request and for the expenditure of matching funds. This includes, wherever applicable, any assumptions which were used in the calculation of the budget. The details and assumptions on budget items should be provided in the Budget Assumption section of the application or on an attached spreadsheet. If estimates or bids have been obtained, please indicate this in the Budget Assumptions section and upload documentation as an attachment.

All spending must meet state guidelines for funding. *For example, only state rates will be paid out for travel and meal costs.*

Project budgets should provide details based on the following instructions:

- **Salaries and Benefits** – List all staff positions by title. Give either hourly, daily, weekly, or monthly wage rate, number of units directed to working on the project, and total cost for the project term. Identify the percentage used for benefits and show computation.
- **Administrative Costs** - Show either computation for administrative costs or if using percentage of award, indicate the percentage being used
- **Professional Services** – Indicate the type of each professional service being used, e.g. web development, and estimated costs for each service in the Budget Assumption section in the application.
- **Materials Costs** – Indicate the type of materials being purchased, e.g., educational brochures, the number of units and the cost per unit.
- **Equipment Costs** – Indicate the type of equipment being purchased, the number of units and the cost per unit in the Budget Assumption section.
- **Indirect Cost** – *Indirect costs shall not be more than 10% of the total project cost.*
- **Other Costs** – Please indicate any other costs that do not fit into the above categories. Where applicable, indicate the number of units being purchased and the cost per unit.